

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BANGKO 19422 121252Z

43

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 AID-05 SAM-01 /069 W

----- 038484

P R 121219Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9061

INFO AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

AMCONSUL UDORN

CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 19422

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, TH

SUBJ: RTG TO PROPOSE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ABOLISHING UPPER
HOUSE

REF: A. BFIS D120427Z DEC 74 (NOTAL)

B. BANGKOK 16119

C. BANGKOK 16400

D. BANGKOK 16519

E. BANGKOK 16854

BEGIN SUMMARY: APPARENTLY RESPONDING TO PRESSURE FROM KING
PHUMIPHON ADUNYADET, THE SANYA GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO
INITIATE ACTION TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION AND ABOLISH ALL
REFERENCES TO THE UPPER HOUSE. THE RTG RESISTED OTHER ATTEMPTS
TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION IMMEDIATELY AFTER ITS RATIFICATION
LAST OCTOBER. APPARENTLY IT INTENDS TO PUSH THROUGH THIS
ONE AMENDMENT AND MAINTAIN THE STRAIGHT ARM ON OTHERS. END
SUMMARY.

1. THE SANYA GOVERNMENT HAS SUDDENLY DECIDED TO AMEND THE
OCTOBER 7 CONSTITUTION (REF A) AND MAKE THE FUTURE
PARLIAMENT UNICAMERAL. THE FOLLOWING IS AN UNOFFICIAL
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BANGKO 19422 121252Z

USIS TRANSLATION OF COMMENTS PRIME MINISTER SANYA

THAMMASAK MADE ON THIS SUBJECT DURING A DECEMBER 12 PRESS CONFERENCE:

BEGIN EXCERPTS:

SANYA ... WITH ALL AWARENESS IT WAS DECIED TO PROPOSE AN AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THAILAND ON ONLY ONE IMPORTANT POINT; THAT IS, TO HAVE A ONE HOUSE PARLIAMENT AND TO ABOLISH THE SENATE. FOR WHAT REASONS? FOR REASONS AS FOLLOWS. FIRST, WHEN THOROUGH ANALYSIS HAS BEEN DONE, IT IS SEEN THAT ONLY LITTLE OF THE AUTHORITY AND DUTY OF THE SENATE IS LEFT IN THE PROMULGATED CONSTITUTION -- SO LITTLE AUTHORITY AND DUTY IS LEFT THAT THE EXISTENCE OF THE SENATE IS DEEMED UNSUITABLE. IN THE GOVERNMENT'S DRAFT CONSTITUTION THE SENATE WOULD HAVE MUCH MORE AUTHORITY THAN IT DOES AT PRESENT. BUT AFTER IT HAD PASSED THE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY AND WAS PROMULGATED, IT IS SEEN THAT THE SENATE'S AUTHORITY AND DUTY WAS SO MUCH REDUCED THAT IT IS DEEMED UNSUITABLE AS MENTIONED BEFORE. THAT IS ONE REASON.

SECONDLY, WE HAVE BEEN AWARE OF HIS MAJESTY THE KING'S COMMENT WHEN HE SIGNED THE CONSTITUTION. THE COMMENT BEING ONE IMPORTANT POINT, THAT IS HE DISAGREED WITH THE IDEA OF HAVING THE CHIEF OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL TO SIGN FOR HIM IN THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE SENATE. THE GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN THIS POINT FOR CONSIDERATION ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, AND IT IS DEEMED THAT, IN ORDER TO ELIMINATE THE PROBLEMS WHICH WORRY HIS MAJESTY THE KING, AND FOR THE REASON AS ALREADY MENTIONED ABOUT THE REDUCED AUTHORITY OF MEMBERS OF THE SENATE, THE SENATE ITSELF HAD BETTER NOT EXIST. SO THE DRAFT AMENDMENT WILL BE PROPOSED TO THE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR ITS CONSIDERATION. WHETHER IT IS APPROPRIATE OR NOT DEPENDS ON THE JUDGMENT OF THE ASSEMBLY. SO THERE ARE TWO REASONS CONCERNED. (TURNING TO DEP. PM) WHEN WILL IT BE PROPOSED?

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER: MAYBE TOMORROW OR THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BANGKO 19422 121252Z

SANYA ... CURRENTLY THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY APPOINTED A COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE DRAFT AMENDMENT WITH THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AS CHAIRMAN SO I MAY ANNOUNCE NOW WHO THERE ARE ON THE COMMITTEE. THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR, THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE, THE MINISTER ATTACHED TO THE OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER, AND THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF JUSTICE WHO

MAKES THE DRAFT AMENDMENT AND WHO HAS ALREADY MADE IT
BUT OTHER COMMITTEEMEN HAVE NOT STUDIED IT YET.
THEY WILL STUDY IT THIS AFTERNOON. END EXCERPTS.

2. COMMENT: THE GOVERNMENT HAD EARLIER BLOCKED VARIOUS
ASSEMBLYMEN'S ATTEMPTS TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION TO
LOWER THE VOTING AGE AND THE MINIMUM AGE FOR PARLIAMENTARY
CANDIDATES. IN THIS BLOCKING ATTEMPT THE GOVERNMENT INTERPRETED
THE CONSTITUTION TO MEAN THAT THE PRESENT NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY COULD NOT EXERCISE THE FULL POWERS OF PARLIAMENT (REFS
B THROUGH E). THIS TACK ALMOST MANEUVERED THE GOVERNMENT INTO
VOIDING THE ELECTION OF PRAPHAT UAI-CHAI TO REPLACE M.R.
KHUKRIT PRAMOT AS SPEAKER OF THE NLA. THE GOVERNMENT'S
PRESENT VOLTE FACE MAY RISK REOPENING THE EARLIER
PROBLEMS OVER OPENING THE CONSTITUTION TO AMENDMENT.

3. THE ABOLITION OF THE SENATE IS A SENSITIVE POLITICAL
QUESTION WHICH COULD CAUSE CONSIDERABLE PRIME MINISTERIAL
HEARTBURN. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE
NOT RUNNING IN THE 26 JANUARY 1975 PARLIAMENTARY
ELECTIONS UNDER THE ASSUMPTION THAT THEY WILL ENTER
THROUGH THE SENATORIAL BACK DOOR. SOME PARLIAMENTARY
CANDIDATES ARE ALSO UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY WILL
ENTER THE SENATE IF THEY LOSE THEIR CONTESTS. ABOLISHING THE
SENATE TAMPERS WITH EXPECTATIONS SUCH AS THESE WHICH ORIGINATE
IN POWERFUL CIRCLES. SINCE THE KING IS SUPPORTING THE MOVE,
IT MAY PASS, BUT NOT WITHOUT ANGUISH.
MASTERS

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: KING, PERSONAL OPINION, CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS, PRESS CONFERENCES, UPPER HOUSE, REORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BANGKO19422
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740361-0032
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741241/aaaabjcr.tel
Line Count: 143
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 74 BFIS D120427Z, 74 DEC 74
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12-Aug-2002 by cunninfx>; APPROVED <24 MAR 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RTG TO PROPOSE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ABOLISHING UPPER HOUSE
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, TH, (PHUMIPHON ADUNYADET), (SANYA THAMMASAK)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005